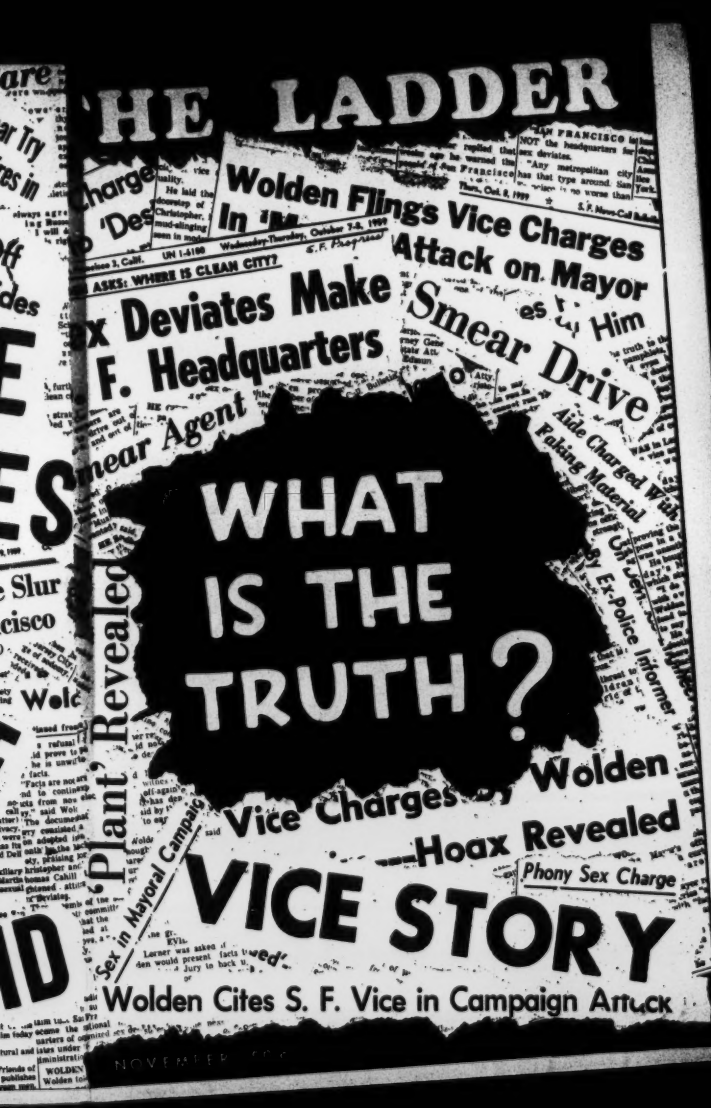
HE LADDER
Wolden Flings Vice Charges In
Attack on Mayor
Smear Drive
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purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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COVER BY DON

EDITORIAL

San Francisco's Challenge

The attack on homosexuals at election time is not a new thing to San Francisco. The "climate" has always been "hot" prior to November in election years - regardless of who held the reins at City Hall. However, this year there was a slight turn of events - instead of raids on "gay bars" and police round-ups of known homosexuals in order for the incumbent to back his claim of a "clean city", we have an attack on "organized sex deviates" by the opposition.

The facts, of course, have been twisted to arouse the public to righteous indignation and condemnation of two San Francisco organizations dealing with the problems of homosexuality and sex variance. These organizations, the Mattachine Society, Inc., and the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., (two independent and distinct groups, the latter being a women's group) have undertaken to solve this long neglected civic-social problem. They recognize that the problem of sex deviation cannot be solved through legislation and wholesale raids, that homosexuality has existed in the past and will continue to exist despite such tactics. So they have undertaken a program of "enlightenment" - the search for knowledge instead of wild accusation.

With the help of professional persons in the fields of psychology, sociology, law, anthropology, relition and philosophy these organizations have sought to bring understanding to the problem of homosexuality. What is it? Why does it exist? Is it a diseas? Can it be cured? How can we best help the individual to make his adjustment and become a productive citizen of the community?

Because this ambitious and controversial program has been fostered within its boundaries, a city has been challenged.

How will San Francisco react?

- Del Martin

'ORGANIZED HOMOSEXUALS' Issue in S. F. Election

CHRISTOPHER WINS

ELECTION RETURNS AS WE GO TO PRESS SHOW INCUMBENT MAYOR GEORGE CHRISTOPHER WINNING HANDILY OVER HIS OPPONENT RUSSELL L. WOLDEN.

Homosexuality was violently interjected into the mayoralty campaign in San Francisco on October 7. On that date a "throwaway" neighborhood paper, the "San Francisco Progress", published a front page article entitled "Sex Deviates Make S.F. Headquarters".

Core of the charge was a resolution adopted by the Mattachine Society at its Sixth annual convention held in Denver, Colo., in September. The resolution reads:

WHEREAS the goals of the Mattachine Society call for tolerance and understanding of the problems and rights of certain minority groups within a community, and

WHEREAS the Mattachine Society is cognizant of basic constitutional principles in America which guarantee these groups the rights of lawful and peaceful expression of their sincere aspirations of improvement and acceptance of the sometimes different groups, and

WHEREAS the Mattachine Society is deeply appreciative of the efforts of law enforcement authorities in San Francisco based upon an officially administered entity, enlightened, and just City Government and Police Force,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT HERE RESOLVED that the Mattachine Society go on record as recognizing and expressing its appreciation to Mayor George Christopher and Police Chief Thomas Cahill for their persistent and consistent efforts to conduct their administration with these high ideals foremost in mind and congratulate them for favorable results in the sociological problem areas.

The resolution was passed unanimously by the convention.

Prior to the "expose" the campaign had been rather tame. Russell L. Wolden, San Francisco assessor, was opposing the incumbent, Mayor George Christopher. The partisan element had been interjected into the campaign and the consensus was the election could go either way.

The picture changed considerably after publication of the story in the Progress.

The throwaway's story pointed out that San Francisco "has become the national headquarters of the organized homosexuals in the United States" by virtue of the fact the Mattachine Society has its national office here. The paper claimed the headquarters were moved here from Los Angeles due to the "more beneficial climate" in San Francisco.

VICE SURVEY

The information in the story was allegedly gathered in a survey of vice conditions in San Francisco "made in an effort to determine the truth or falsity of George Christopher's claim that he has given the people a 'clean city'."

Although primarily devoted to discussion of the Mattachine Society, the article also mentioned Jim Kepner Jr., chairman of ONE, Inc., and Del Martin, president of the DOB, both of whom spoke at the Denver convention. Incidentally, the story relegated DOB to the status of "sort of a woman's auxiliary to Mattachine".

The article went on to mention homosexual bars, steam baths, cafes, hotels and after-hours spots. There was a great deal more in the same vein - 36½ inches, to be exact.

Mr. Wolden repeated the gist of the article in a radio broadcast that evening (at the dinner hour), emphasizing the "family aspects" - that no child was safe, etc., and calling for his election so he could remedy these conditions.

The three San Francisco daily newspapers, all of which were supporting Christopher for mayor, picked up the story the next day. Their reaction was virtually unanimous - "smear".

Mayor Christopher replied to Wolden, praising the good reputation of the Police Department nationally. "Weeks ago I warned the people of San Francisco that they could expect this kind of scurrility. . . .This accusation is the dying gasp of a desperate politician".

On October 9 the San Francisco dailies revealed that the resolution passed by Mattachine was, in the words of the "San Francisco Chronicle", "a plant by a behind-the-scenes operator in the Wolden campaign."

Said the Chronicle's front-page story: "The mysterious figure who worked the resolution through the Society during its Denver convention turned out to be William Patrick Brandhove." The paper stated Brandhove "was once a Communist, later a loud ex-Communist - and built up a long police record during both periods." The story goes on to detail how Brandhove joined Mattachine and attended the Denver convention, even acting as parliamentarian during business sessions.

It was Brandhove who introduced the resolution to the delegates from the San Francisco Area Council, according to Harold L. Call, Mattachine publications director. Call said Brandhove reported some members of the San Francisco Police Department had requested the resolution be passed. The original resolution, supposedly mailed from San Francisco to Denver, was reworded by the San Francisco delegates before being presented to the convention.

Brandhove admitted he was a Wolden supporter, but denied he had received any money from Wolden forces. He said his survey of sex deviates was financed by himself, the Chronicle stated.

SLANDER SUIT FILED

Following the story in the Progress the Mattachine Society filed a $1,103,500.00 slander suit against Wolden, declar-

ing he "wrongfully and maliciously . . . declared (the society) was organized homosexuals . . . and exposed teen-agers to contact with homosexuals."

In the meantime all three daily papers - the Chronicle, San Francisco Examiner and News-Call Bulletin - called upon Wolden to "get out of the race", claiming he had besmirched the name of San Francisco and was unfit for the position of Mayor.

Wolden supporters fell off the bandwagon in droves, among them candidates running on the Democratic ticket with him.

His big financial backers met to consider the situation. They agreed to continue their support, although they did not seem too happy with the way the campaign was being conducted. In fact, one took a paid ad in the News-Call Bulletin which stated "I do not always agree with everything Russell Wolden says but I will defend to the death his right to say it."

PRESS ATTACKED

The following week Wolden attacked the three daily newspapers through a radio speech and in the Progress. He told the public they had seen "the steam-roller of an arrogant press racing at full throttle to destroy a man." He referred to the exclusively pro-Christopher tone of the stories in the dailies.

Coverage of the story in the papers was full and complete following publication of the first article in the Progress. But the news fell off after October 15, the day following Wolden's charge against the press. Since that time one is hard put to find the situation mentioned.

Strangest of all is the almost complete lack of "letters to the editor" in any of the daily press.

PAMPHLET CIRCULATED

Although the news in the press quieted down, other forces were at work. A four-page letter-sized pamphlet was dis-

tributed door-to-door in areas of San Francisco, continuing the "expose".

It was presented as a message from Brandhove, explaining his role in the matter. In it Brandhove explained his various arrests and gave a history of his former employment and labor union activities.

He explained that he joined the Mattachine Society to learn more about it, and adds "I am convinced that the true purpose of the Mattachine Society is to subvert public morals and change our entire social structure to the point where homosexual activities will be regarded as normal and harmless."

He states he has turned documented evidence over to his attorney, including motion pictures, tape recordings, sworn statements and affidavits by licensed private detectives, and numerous publications and documents of the Mattachine Society or its subsidiaries.

DOB MENTIONED

Although the DOB was briefly mentioned in the first Progress story, it was not mentioned at all in the daily press. Mr. Brandhove brought it back into the picture in his pamphlet by stating:

"And you parents of daughters -- do not sit back complacently feeling that because you have no boys in your family, everything is all right as far as you are concerned. To enlighten you as to the existence of a Lesbian organization composed of homosexual women, whose purposes are the same as the Mattachine Society, the male counterpart, make yourselves acquainted with the name 'Daughters of Bilitis'."

The DOB address and phone number is then given, along with that of Mattachine. The pamphlet ends with a plea for funds on the part of Brandhove.

MATTACHINE SUIT

The taking of depositions from Brandhove and Wolden in

the Mattachine slander suit against the latter was originally set for before the election. However the court ruled that since it was a damage suit it had no bearing on the election and re-set the date for November 5.

'More Alike Than Different'

MOST DISCUSSIONS ON HOMOSEXUALITY TEND TO POINT UP THE DIFFERENCES AND LITTLE IS SAID OR EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT THE LIKENESSES TO HETEROSEXUALITY.

THE FACT STILL REMAINS THAT HOMOSEXUALS, LIKE HETEROSEXUALS, ARE PEOPLE. AND ACCORDING TO DR. LEO V. TEPLEY, DENVER PSYCHIATRIST WHO ADDRESSED THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY AT ITS SEPTEMBER CONVENTION, "PEOPLE ARE MORE ALIKE THAN DIFFERENT."

WHEN WE CONSIDER THE ROLE OF THE HOMOPHILE IN SOCIETY TODAY, WE NATURALLY BECOME CONSCIOUS FIRST OF HIS METHODS OF SEXUAL GRATIFICATION - THIS IS THE OUTSTANDING FACTOR THAT SETS HIM APART FROM THE SOCIETY IN WHICH HE MOVES. YET, IF FOR A BIT, WE SET ASIDE THIS ASPECT OF HIS LIFE, IT BECOMES IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS THAT HE IS MUCH MORE LIKE THE OTHER MEMBERS OF SOCIETY THAN HE IS DIFFERENT.

TAKE APPEARANCE FOR INSTANCE. PEOPLE ARE SHORT, TALL, SKINNY, FAT, WELL BUILT, DUMPY, BEAUTIFUL, PLAIN, UGLY, UNKEMPT, UNCONSPICUOUS, SHOWY. THERE IS NO HARD AND FAST RULE FOR DISTINGUISHING THE HOMOSEXUAL FROM THE HETEROSEXUAL. EVEN THE SO-CALLED "MASCULINE" WOMAN OR THE "EFFEMINATE" MAN MAY FOOL THE WISEACRERS !.

"THE PURSUIT OF LIFE, LIBERTY AND HAPPINESS" IS COMMON TO ALL OF US. THERE ARE THE BASIC NEEDS FOR SHELTER, FOOD AND CLOTHING WITH A JOB AND INCOME TO PROVIDE THESE NECESSITIES OF LIFE. THERE IS THE LOVE, LOYALTY AND PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY TO BE NURTURED. THERE IS THE DESIRE FOR THE SECURITY AND FULFILLMENT OF A PARTNERSHIP BASED ON LOVE, UNDERSTANDING AND COMPANIONSHIP. THERE IS THE NEED FOR A "HOME" - THE SENSE OF "BELONGING" AND HAVING ROOTS. THERE IS THE NEED

FOR RESPECT OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN HIS PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. THESE NEEDS AND DESIRES ARE SHARED BY HOMOSEXUAL AND HETEROSEXUAL ALIKE.

ALICE LaVERE, SAN FRANCISCO CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGIST, STATED AT A DOB PUBLIC DISCUSSION MEETING THAT SOME HOMOSEXUALS ARE NEUROTIC, SOME HAVE SCHIZOPHRENIC TENDENCIES, MANY ARE PARANOID, BUT MANY ARE STABLE, WELL-ADJUSTED AND USEFUL CITIZENS. AND, SHE ADDED, THE SAME STATEMENT COULD APPLY EQUALLY WELL TO THE HETEROSEXUAL.

"THE HOMOSEXUAL SUFFERS MORE FOM THE FEELING OF BEING UNWANTED AND SHUNNED THAN FROM ANY ILLNESS. HETEROSEXUALS SUFFER JUST AS MUCH FROM THESE FEELINGS. AS A GROUP, HOMOPHILES AND HETEROPHILES FACE THE SAME SOCIAL AND MENTAL PROBLEMS, HAVE THE SAME FEELINGS AND THE SAME FEARS."

IT MIGHT BE POINTED OUT TOO THAT BEHAVIOR WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED OFFENSIVE OR OBJECTIONABLE TO THE HETROSEXUAL WOULD LIKEWISE BE CONSIDERED SO BY THE HOMOSEXUAL. A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC WELFARE AND JUST PLAIN "GOOD TASTE" IS NOT EXCLUSIVE WITH THE HETEROSEXUAL ANY MORE THAN THE OFFENSES TO THE PUBLIC MORES REST ENTIRELY UPON THE HOMOSEXUAL.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THE MAIN OBJECT OF ALL PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR SEXUAL PREFERENCE, IS TO BE ABLE TO LIVE AND GET ALONG WITH OTHERS. AS LONG AS THE OUTWARD FORMS OF PROPRIETY ARE OBSERVED, THE PERSONAL LIFE OF ANY INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE HIS OWN. THE HOMOSEXUAL ASKS ONLY FOR THE SAME RIGHTS THAT THE HETEROSEXUAL TAKES FOR GRANTED.

"Sexual morality, freed from superstition, is a simple matter. Fraud and deceit, assault, seduction of persons under age are proper matters for the criminal law. Relations between adults who are free agents are a private matter, and should not be interfered with either by the law or by public opinion, because no outsider can know whether they are good or bad."

- Bertrand Russell

The Role of the PRESS

AS YOU WHO READ LAST MONTH'S LADDER KNOW, WE AND MATTACHINE WERE JUSTIFIABLY PROUD OF THE PUBLICITY ACCORDED THE DENVER CONVENTION OF THE SOCIETY BY THE DENVER PAPERS. OUR MAIN HEADLINE HERALDED "MATTACHINE BREAKS THROUGH THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE." LITTLE DID WE KNOW. THOSE OF US IN SAN FRANCISCO, FOLLOWING THE LOUD ELECTION EXPLOSION, WERE WONT TO THINK THE "BREAK-THROUGH" HAD TAKEN ON THE DIMENSIONS OF A MAJOR ASSAULT.

THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC PRESS IN THE JUST-FINISHED ELECTION IN SAN FRANCISCO HAS BEEN RATHER STRANGE. THE THREE DAILIES IN THE CITY - SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER AND NEWS-CALL BULLETIN - WERE ALL SUPPORTING GEORGE CHRISTOPHER FOR MAYOR BEFORE HIS OPPONENT, RUSSELL L. WOLDEN, DROPPED HIS BOMB-SHELL BY ACCUSING THE INCUMBENT OF ALLOWING "SEX DEVIATES" FREE REIN IN THE CITY.

THE REACTION OF ALL THREE PAPERS FOLLOWING WOLDEN'S "EXPOSE" WAS ALMOST UNANIMOUS. ALTHOUGH THE CHRONICLE IS AN INDEPENDENT PAPER, THE EXAMINER A HEARST PAPER AND THE NEWS-CALL BULLETIN A COMBINATION OF HEARST AND SCRIPPS HOWARD, ALL THREE CALLED THE WOLDEN BLAST "SMEAR". AND ALL THREE WERE EMINENTLY FAIR TO THE ONE ORGANIZATION PRIMARILY INVOLVED - THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY.

THE OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY WERE QUOTED CORRECTLY; THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME "MATTACHINE" WAS GIVEN; ALL EXPOSED THE ROLE WILLIAM P. BRANDHOVE PLAYED IN THE DENVER CONVENTION OF MATTACHINE, ESPECIALLY WITH REFERENCE TO THE RESOLUTION PRAISING CHRISTOPHER AND POLICE CHIEF THOMAS CAHILL. ADDITIONALLY, ALL THREE PAPERS REFRAINED, FOR THE MOST PART, FROM CALLING MATTACHINE A "HOMOSEXUAL ORGANIZATION" - THEY DESIGNATED IT, CORRECTLY, AS A GROUP INTERESTED IN THE PROBLEMS OF HOMOSEXUALITY.

THIS ACCUSATION BY THE ASPIRANT TO THE MAYORSHIP AGAINST THE INCUMBENT TOOK ON THE ASPECTS OF A MAJOR CAMPAIGN ISSUE. HOWEVER, THE PARTISAN PRESS, DAMNING WOLDEN, LET THE MATTER DROP AS SOON AS WOLDEN DID - LITTLE MORE THAN A WEEK AFTER THE FIRST ASSAULT. AND MAYOR CHRISTOPHER REFUSED TO ANSWER THE CHARGES, DEEMING THEM TOO SCURRILOUS TO DESERVE RETORT.

BUT STRANGEST OF ALL WAS THE LACK OF "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR". IT WOULD SEEM THAT IN A CITY LIKE SAN FRANCISCO, CONTAINING SOME 700,000 PEOPLE, SOMEONE WOULD HAVE AN OPINION ON A CHARGE SUCH AS THAT MADE BY WOLDEN. AND OF THESE PEOPLE WITH OPINIONS, SOME WOULD WRITE TO THEIR NEWSPAPERS.

BUT IN ALL THE ISSUES OF ALL THREE PAPERS SINCE THE NEWS BROKE, APPROXIMATELY EIGHT LETTERS HAVE APPEARED IN PRINT. PERHAPS THE "CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE" IS STILL WORKING.

THE NEWS-CALL BULLETIN, IN ONE ISSUE, PUBLISHED SOME SIX LETTERS, DIVIDED EVENLY PRO AND CON. THE PRO BEING MAINLY AGREEMENT THAT WOLDEN WAS "PLAYING DIRTY" BY USING SMEAR TACTICS. ONE LETTER IN THE CHRONICLE, BY A MARRIED WOMAN AND MOTHER OF FOUR CHILDREN, FOUND WOLDEN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE HOMOSEXUAL "ARCHAIC" AND ARGUED THAT IF HE WAS THAT FAR BEHIND THE TIMES HE CERTAINLY WOULDN'T MAKE A GOOD MAYOR. THE EIGHTH LETTER OBJECTED TO WOLDEN'S TERMING SAN FRANCISCO THE "NATIONAL CAPITAL OF SEX DEVIATES". THE WRITER CLAIMED SAUSALITO, A SMALL COMMUNITY ACROSS THE GOLDEN GATE FROM SAN FRANCISCO, DESERVED THAT TITLE.

IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO WATCH THE DEVELOPMENTS NOW THAT THE ELECTION IS OVER. WE WONDER IF IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE PAPERS WILL RELENT A BIT AND PUBLISH SOME OF THE LETTERS THEY UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE RECEIVED.

AUTHOR'S ROUNDTABLE PLANNED FOR 1960 DOB CONVENTION

OPPORTUNITY TO MEET THE AUTHORS AND HEAR THEIR DISCUSSION OF PUBLISHING PROBLEMS WITH REGARD TO LESBIAN SUBJECT MATTER WILL BE GIVEN THOSE WHO ATTEND DOB'S FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO OVER MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND NEXT YEAR.

TENTATIVE ACCEPTANCES HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM CAROL HALES, AUTHOR OF "WIND WOMAN"; LISA BEN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF THE FIRST LESBIAN PUBLICATION, "VICE VERSA"; ARTEMIS SMITH, AUTHOR OF "ODD GIRL"; MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY, SCIENCE FICTION WRITER; FRANCES LASALLE, FICTION WRITER WHO HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE LADDER. IT IS HOPED THAT DOB WILL BE ABLE TO CONTACT MORE WRITERS IN THE FIELD BETWEEN NOW AND CONVENTION TIME.

WHAT ABOUT THE DOB?

The Daughters of Bilitis, Inc., is a non-profit organization which was founded prior to election in 1955 and incorporated under the laws of the State of California in 1957. Established as a women's organization for the purpose of promoting the integration of the homosexual into society, it has also been qualified under Federal law by the Bureau of Internal Revenue as a non-profit corporation with contributions deductible on income tax returns.

"ORGANIZED HOMOSEXUALS?"

The DOB membership is comprised of women interested in the problems of the homosexual in our society - some mothers, some heterosexual women and of course, Lesbians themselves. The Lesbian who joins would tend to be the thoughtful, public spirited, responsible type, for the organization places particular emphasis on helping her to understand herself and her relationship to society. If this means "organized homosexuals", then it is an organization for social, not anti-social, ends.

CLANDESTINE ORGANIZATION?

Clandestine means "secret, hidden or underhanded". Those who would question the existence of our organizations would seem to infer the "underhanded" definition. They base the accusation upon the fact that the organizations have declared quite openly that with the exception of national officers, the anonymity of members and subscribers would be protected. This would seem to be very logical under the circumstances in which we live in this society. Ignorance breeds fear and hostility and until education in this field relieves the necessity, concealment of identity is only practical. Just as many authors who have broached a controversial subject have chosen to use a pseudonym, many members do likewise. This matter is left entirely up to the individual.

THREAT TO PUBLIC MORALITY?

DOB sponsors open meetings which have had as guest speakers professional persons in the fields ofpsychology, sociology, religion, philosophy, law and anthropology. The organization publishes a monthly magazine which is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects. DOB members have cooperated in research projects conducted by the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research and by others in the psychological field. The September LADDER was devoted in its entirety to a sociological survey conducted by members of the organization itself. This data was gathered primarily for use by professional persons to better understand and handle the Lesbian problem. The organization also holds regular group therapy sessions to enable

the Lesbian to understand herself.

How can such a program threaten the public? The DOB and similar organizations might conceivably stimulate public thinking and discussion as to what its moral views actually are with regard to various aspects of sex. Free discussion of any issue, including this one, with the presentation of all sides of the question, should be a contribution, not a threat, to the public good.

CHILD MOLESTERS?

DOB is an organization of adult women. The rule - "no minors allowed" - is strictly adhered to. It has already been stated that many of our members have a homosexual orientation and by token of their sexual preference, which does not conform to the pattern of the majority, may be called sex deviates. The sex deviate is anyone varying in any manner from the legal method of sexual gratification and by such definition would even include many socially accepted married couples. At the New York convention of the Mattachine Society in 1958, Dr. Theodore Weiss, senior psychiatrist at Bellevue Hospital, stated that only a small percentage of sexual deviates are child molesters and there is "no evidence to show that this crime is perpetrated more by homosexuals than heterosexuals".

REVISION OF SEX LAWS?

The law in relation to the homosexual must necessarily be a part of any study of homosexuality. DOB' s concern with laws can be best expressed by the following excerpt from an "Open Letter to Assemblyman John A. O'Connell", chairman of the California Assembly Interim Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, which appeared in THE LADDER for September, 1958:

It is generally conceded by the experts in the field that the cause of homosexuality is still an unknown quantity, that it is a process of development and not a matter of choice, that the incidence cannot be controlled by legislation, that the fear and insecurity imposed upon the homosexual by prejudiced and outmoded laws hamper the therapist in his efforts to help the individual make his

adjustment to himself and society, and finally that legal prohibitions benefit no one but the blackmailers.

Steps to remedy such unjust and passe laws have been taken recently in England. The Wolfenden Committee recommended to Parliament that English law be changed so that homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private no longer be considered a criminal offense. The Church of England has approved the report and ... the English Methodist Church went on record to urge the passage of the Wolfenden recommendations, stating that the law should not interfere with private homosexual conduct "unless that conduct is clearly detrimental to the public good in an extraordinary degree."

In our own country the American Law Institute has spent years of work in drafting a model penal code which would modify the antiquated statutes now on the books. It is certainly to be hoped that special study be given to this document of modern legal thought before any revisions to California laws are considered.

We believe that the practical solution to the problem is to judge sex activity on the grounds of whether or not society is harmed. Homosexual activity between consenting adults in private is not harmful to society. However, there must necessarily be protection given the public against offenders where assault, force or violence is involved; in the cases of molesting children whether they be homosexual or heterosexual in nature, and against indecent public behavior. We are not asking for license, but rather a realistic approach to an ever-growing problem.

We would ask the committee to give consideration too to the laws requiring persons who have been convicted of a homosexual act to register with the police as sexual psychopaths on entering the community. This law, besides being unfair, is in our opinion unconstitutional.

We also call your attention to the tactics of certain law enforcement agencies where the use of decoys is employed to entice individuals into engaging in an overt homosexual act leading to arrest. It would seem to us that the first duty of the police is to <u>prevent</u>, not to punish crime -

certainly not to incite or create crime for the sole purpose of its prosecution and punishment.

...We sincerely hope that out of your investigations will come definite action toward long needed remedial legislation for an equitable, realistic and enforceable penal code.

"ENLIGHTENED ATTITUDE?"

It has been inferred that an "enlightened" administrative attitude is synonymous with leniency toward crime. This is as ridiculous as saying an "enlightened attitude" toward mental health causes mental illness. Whether or not the city administration and/or police are aware of it, the organizations are in effect acting as a policing force. DOB has tried to channel the homosexual's activities into a constructive program of benefit, both to the individual and to the public at large. The "gay bar" is no longer the only place where homosexuals may gather. DOB promotes nothing that is criminal and discourages any acts offending public decency.

DOB pleads guilty only to the attempt to provide enlightenment ("give the light of truth and knowledge to; free from prejudice, ignorance, etc." - Dictionary definition) on the very controversial subject of homosexuality.

NEXT MONTH . . .

BECAUSE THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE LADDER FELT THAT THE ATTACK ON THE ORGANIZATIONS DEALING WITH HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE SAN FRANCISCO ELECTION CALLED FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION, LESBIANA AND FICTION AND POETRY WERE OMITTED FROM THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE. THERE JUST WASN'T ENOUGH SPACE FOR EVERYTHING. HOWEVER, THESE FEATURES WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE TOGETHER WITH A FOLLOW-UP, IF ANY, ON THE SAN FRANCISCO SCENE.

A Christmas Story

THIS IS A STORY OF SURVIVAL. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE CURRENT ELECTION IN SAN FRANCISCO. WE CANNOT CONCEIVE OF THAT PARTICULAR TURN OF EVENTS HAVING ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE CONTINUANCE OF DOB OR OF THE LADDER.

HOWEVER, WE CAN CONCEIVE OF DISCONTINUING THE LADDER UNLESS WE BEGIN TO REACH MORE READERS. OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST IS PITIFULLY SMALL CONSIDERING THAT WE HAVE BEEN PUBLISHING FOR THREE YEARS.

IF OUR READERS WISH US TO CONTINUE, THEN WE MUST ASK THEIR HELP. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT IF EACH SUBSCRIBER WOULD SEND A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION TO A FRIEND, OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST WOULD BE DOUBLED IMMEDIATELY.

SO PLEASE - HOW ABOUT PLAYING SANTA CLAUS THIS YEAR?

YOU CAN DO THE LADDER A GOOD TURN BY HELPING THE MAGAZINE TO BECOME MORE SOLVENT FINANCIALLY. YOU CAN HELP THE DOB BY GETTING THE MESSAGE OF THE ORGANIZATION TO MORE PEOPLE. YOU CAN DO THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE A FAVOR BY SEEING TO IT THAT MORE OF THE GENERAL POPULATION BECOMES AWARE OF THE ROLE OF THE HOMOSEXUAL IN SOCIETY. AND FINALLY, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP A FRIEND OR RELATIVE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND ALL THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE HOMOSEXUAL "PROBLEM".

SEND YOUR REQUESTS FOR CHRISTMAS GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS TOGETHER WITH YOUR REMITTANCE OF $4.00 TO

THE LADDER
165 O'FARRELL ST., ROOM 405
SAN FRANCISCO 2, CALIFORNIA

PLEASE INDICATE THAT THE RECIPIENT OF THE SUBSCRIPTION IS 21 YEARS OF AGE OR MORE. A GIFT CARD WILL BE ENCLOSED WITH THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE IF SO DESIRED.

IT MIGHT ALSO BE POINTED OUT THAT BACK ISSUES OF THE LADDER ARE AVAILABLE - WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE FIRST FIVE. YOU MAY WISH TO COMPLETE YOUR OWN SET. INDIVIDUAL COPIES ARE 50 CENTS.

READER'S RESPOND

"I FOUND YOUR SEPTEMBER ISSUE FASCINATING. EVEN THOUGH IT MAY NOT ACTUALLY PROVE ANYTHING IT CERTAINLY IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THERE HAS BEEN FAR TOO LITTLE PUBLISHED ABOUT THE AVERAGE LESBIAN.

"ENCLOSED IS A SMALL DONATION TO HELP THE CAUSE ALONG.

"INCIDENTALLY, HOW ABOUT A SIMILAR SURVEY OF MALE HOMOSEXUALS? IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO COMPARE THE TWO."

F.K., OREGON

COINCIDENTALLY, DOB HAS JUST EMBARKED ON A SIMILAR SURVEY OF MALE HOMOSEXUALS WHICH WE HOPE TO COMPARE WITH THE SURVEY PUBLISHED IN THE SEPTEMBER LADDER. RESULTS WILL BE GIVEN AT DOB'S FIRST CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO OVER MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND NEXT YEAR. -ED.

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"THE FRIENDLY AND COURTEOUS NOTICE OF MY NOVELS IN YOUR AUGUST ISSUE RAISES A POINT WHICH I THINK IMPORTANT FROM A WRITER'S POINT OF VIEW; INDEED, OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE. MISS STRONG DESCRIBES THE SUBJECT OF THE LAST OF THE WINE AS MALE HOMOSEXUALITY, TRANSFERRED TO AN ANCIENT GREEK SETTING, AND COMMENTS ON THE TOLERANCE OF ITS RECEPTION. I THINK THIS BOOK WAS IN FACT RECEIVED RATHER AS A PORTRAYAL OF ATHENS DURING THE PELOPONNESIAN WARS, AND OF SOME MEMBERS OF THE SOCRATIC CIRCLE. I HOPE SO, SINCE THIS WAS HOW I WISHED IT TO BE JUDGED.

"THE LOVE-RELATIONSHIP IN THE BOOK IS ONE CHARACTERISTIC OF THAT SOCIETY RATHER THAN OUR OWN; NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS RECOGNISED PUBLIC STANDING, BUT BECAUSE THE TWO YOUNG MEN ARE, LIKE MOST CLASSICAL GREEKS, FULLY BISEXUAL. ALEXIAS IS DRAWN INTO IT PARTLY AS AN ESCAPE FROM HIS SUPRESSED LOVE FOR HIS STEPMOTHER; LYSIS FREQUENTS VARIOUS HETAIRAS, WITHOUT ANY QUESTION OF DISLOYALTY TO HIS FRIEND ARISING; BOTH EVENTUALLY MARRY. THIS

PATTERN OF SEXUALITY IS ONE CONSTANTLY MET WITH IN GREEK LITERATURE AND BIOGRAPHY. I THEREFORE ADOPTED IT.

"IN MY VIEW IT IS A PRIMARY DUTY OF THE HISTORICAL NOVELIST TO MAKE HIS CHARACTERS PEOPLE OF THEIR ERA. THE WRITER WHO EXPLOITS A PERIOD SETTING FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES, DRAWING FALLACIOUS PARALLELS WITH HIS OWN SOCIETY, AT ONCE SACRIFICES HIS INTEGRITY NOT LESS THAN BY COMMERCIAL VULGARISING.

"IN THE KING MUST DIE, THE AMAZON BULL-GIRLS WHO ATTRACT THESEUS IN CRETE HAVE A RELEVANT PURPOSE: THEY FORESHADOW HIS FAMOUS LOVE-AFFAIR WITH HIPPOLYTA. THE AIM IS TO MAKE HIS YOUTH CONSISTENT WITH HIS LATER STORY. THESE REFERENCES ARE OF SLIGHT IMPORTANCE IN THE NOVEL AS A WHOLE, THE THEME OF WHICH IS PRIMITIVE KINGSHIP.

"I HOPE YOU WILL NOT FEEL THESE CORRECTIONS TO BE PEDANTIC. I MAKE THEM BECAUSE I BELIEVE THE FIRST LOYALTY OF ANY ARTIST MUST BE TO HIS BASIC HUMANITY AND TO HIS SENSE OF MAN'S PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE. HIS INFLUENCE, IF ANY, MUST BE THAT OF HIS WHOLE MIND AND BEING ON THAT OF THE READER. ASKED 'WHAT ARE YOU?' HIS SPONTANEOUS ANSWER WILL BE 'A WRITER' (OR PAINTER OR WHATEVER IT MAY BE) BECAUSE THIS IS THE FIRST INTENTION OF HIS WILL. IF IN THE PRACTISE OF HIS CRAFT HE CANNOT LEARN MATURITY ENOUGH TO RAISE HIS SIGHTS ABOVE MERE SELF-EXPRESSION, OR CONCERN FOR THE PUBLIC STATUS OF HIS OWN GROUP, OR EVEN SOCIAL REFORM, HE SUBMITS TO A CASTRATION OF HIS CREATIVE SELF FOR WHICH BOTH AS ARTIST AND HUMAN BEING HE WILL BE THE POORER ALL HIS LIFE."

MARY RENAULT, SOUTH AFRICA

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"MAY I REPLY TO J.R.G.'S LETTER PUBLISHED IN THE AUGUST LADDER? GRANTED, SHE HAS MADE SOME VALID CRITICISMS. SOME OF THE POETRY IS ADOLESCENT; SOME OF THE STORIES ARE BADLY WRITTEN. HOWEVER, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MISS J.R.G. HAS SPENT MUCH TIME THINKING ABOUT THE SITUATION.

"AS A HOMOSEXUAL PUBLICATION WITH A LIMITED BUDGET THE LADDER IS SOMEWHAT BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL. FIRST, MANY GOOD OR POTENTIALLY GOOD WRITERS ARE AFRAID TO CONNECT THEMSELVES, EVEN

ANONYMOUSLY, WITH HOMOSEXUALITY. 'WHAT,' MUSES THE YOUNG WRITER, 'WILL MY NORMAL (?) PUBLIC THINK IF THEY FIND THAT I HAVE WRITTEN FOR A LESBIAN PUBLICATION?' SECOND, THE ESTABLISHED WRITER WANTS TO GET PAID FOR HIS WORK. CRASS COMMERCIALIZATION, YOU SAY? HE'S GOT TO LIVE TOO. WHO CAN BLAME HIM? THIRD, THE VERY FACT THAT THIS IS A LESBIAN MAGAZINE LIMITS THE SUBJECT MATTER SOMEWHAT. MANY WRITERS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN OR DO NOT CARE TO DEAL WITH THE LESBIAN THEME.

"SO, PERFORCE, THE LADDER IS REDUCED TO AMATEURS, FULL-TIME SECRETARIES, TEACHERS, NURSES, ETC., WHO WRITE OR ILLUSTRATE IN THEIR SPARE MOMENTS. SOME OF THEIR EFFORTS ARE PRETTY GOOD. FOR EXAMPLE, THE JULY COVER, THE STORY 'MISS TRAVERS' AND OTHER WORK OF HIGH QUALITY. PERHAPS THE LADDER HASN'T ATTAINED THE STANDARDS J.R.G. IS ACCUSTOMED TO IN THE HIGH CLASS SLICKS BUT IT HAS PROVIDED A VOICE FOR THE HOMOSEXUAL WOMAN, AND IN DOING SO I BELIEVE THAT IT IS FILLING A NEED AND DOING A LAUDABLE JOB."

J.F., NEW JERSEY

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"GETTING THE LADDER UP HERE IS ALMOST LIKE A LETTER FROM HOME.

"CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THESE OTHER PEOPLE EXPECT FOR THEIR MONEY. WHAT IS AN EXTRA DOLLAR THIS DAY AND AGE?

"A FRIEND GAVE ME A COPY OF THE LADDER ALMOST 2 YEARS AGO. AT THE RATE YOU PEOPLE ARE GOING $5.00 A YEAR WILL BE A GOOD BARGAIN.

"I SAY, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, YOU'RE DOING GREAT."

N.J.C., ALASKA

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"YOU ASK IF HOMOPHILE WOMEN IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST ARE 'READY' TO FORM A CHAPTER OF THE DOB IN THIS AREA. THERE ARE A FEW, LIKE MY FRIEND AND MYSELF, WHO ARE 'READY' AND WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE TIME AND EFFORT TOWARD MAKING IT A SUCCESS. HOWEVER, I HAVE MET MANY OTHERS, WHO ARE EITHER TOO FEARFUL TO ASSOCIATE

THEMSELVES WITH A HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATION OR SEEM TO BE TOO CONCERNED WITH THEMSELVES TO BE WILLING TO 'GIVE' THEIR TIME AND TALENTS TO ANY ORGANIZATION. THE FIRST NEED MORE COURAGE AND THE LATTER NEED MORE UNSELFISHNESS. I DO NOT FEEL ENOUGH WOMEN ARE 'READY' TO FORM THE STRONG NUCLEUS NECESSARY TO CARRY ANY NEW ORGANIZATION FORWARD TO SUCCESS. I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO BE PROVED WRONG. IF THE ORGANIZATION RECEIVED ENOUGH RESPONSE FROM THIS AREA, WE WILL DO OUR PART TO ORGANIZE A CHAPTER HERE.

"WE ENJOY THE LADDER VERY MUCH, LOOK FORWARD EAGERLY TO EACH ISSUE AND READ IT COMPLETELY ON THE DAY IT ARRIVES. CERTAINLY SOME OF THE WRITING COULD BE BETTER, BUT ON THE WHOLE IT IS GOOD AND IS GOOD AND IS IMPROVING ALL THE TIME."

S.J., WASHINGTON

OKAY, YOU WASHINGTONIANS, WHAT'S YOUR RESPONSE? ANYONE INTERESTED IN FORMATION OF A DOB CHAPTER IN THE SEATTLE AREA SHOULD WRITE TO DOB HEADQUARTERS IN SAN FRANCISCO. - ED.

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"AFTER HAVING READ YOUR JULY ISSUE OF THE LADDER, WE REALIZED THAT WE, TOO, WERE INCLUDED IN THE GROUP OF YOUR READERS WHO HAVE NEGLECTED TO WRITE YOU TO THANK YOU FOR THE WONDERFUL JOB THAT YOU ARE DOING BY PUBLISHING YOUR MAGAZINE.

"WE HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED HERE FROM CANADA THREE MONTHS AGO WITH THE IDEA THAT OUR STAY WAS TO BE ONLY TEMPORARY, BUT SINCE HAVE FOUND OUT THAT WE WILL BE HERE UNTIL THE SPRING OF '60. NOT KNOWING ANYONE HERE, OUR ONLY TOUCH WITH 'GAY' LIFE IS THROUGH YOUR PUBLICATION. SO CONSEQUENTLY EVERY MONTH WHEN THE LADDER APPEARS IN THE MAIL IT IS JUST LIKE 'OLD HOME WEEK' TO US. WE READ IT THOROUGHLY, FROM COVER TO COVER, AND THEN SIT AND DISCUSS SOME OF THE SUBJECTS THEREIN. THEREFORE YOU NOT ONLY GIVE US THE HAPPY READING HOURS BUT ALSO MANY MORE THAT DERIVE FROM YOUR ARTICLES.

"SO, ALTHOUGH WE ARE VERY LATE IN DOING SO, MAY WE OFFER OUR THANKS ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE LETTERS, WE ARE SURE THAT YOU WILL RECEIVE, FOR SUPPLYING US WITH THE FEELING THAT SAN FRANCISCO ISN'T THE BIG LONELY CITY THAT WE THOUGHT IT WAS BEFORE SUB-

SCRIBING TO YOUR MAGAZINE."

K.M. & M.B., CALIFORNIA

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"I NOTE WITH INTEREST THAT SOME OF YOUR READERS COMMENT ABOUT A LACK OF VARIETY WITHIN YOUR PAGES. MAY I SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS A TOPIC COLUMN BE SET UP WHEREIN THE READERS THEMSELVES WOULD WRITE IT BY WRITING REPLIES AND THEN ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS (I SAY 'ALL YOU HAVE TO DO' ADVISEDLY) EDIT. SOMETHING LIKE A MUTUAL PROBLEM-DISCUSSION POT. EXAMPLE: IN DEALING WITH CLOSE PERSONAL FRIENDS HOW DO YOU HANDLE THE LACK OF MALE COMPANIONSHIP AROUND THE APARTMENT? IF YOU FEEL IT IS BETTER IN THE LONG RUN TO INFORM FAMILY/FRIENDS THAT YOU ARE A LESBIAN, HOW DO YOU BROACH IT?

"THESE ARE RATHER RANDOM QUESTIONS, HOWEVER, YOU CAN SEE THAT MANY OF US HAVE SIMILAR PROBLEMS AND THE VERY FACT THAT YOU HAVE SUBSCRIBERS AT ALL WOULD INDICATE OUR NEED TO NOT FEEL ALONE. IT MIGHT HELP CIRCULATION AND STIMULATE INTEREST IF THE READERS COULD FEEL THAT THEY WERE PARTICIPATING WITHOUT FEELING 'COY' REGARDING THEIR LITERARY EFFORTS. EACH OF US HAS RUN INTO PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH THE HETEROSEXUAL WORLD (WHICH TO ME IS VERY MUCH A PART OF MY WORLD) AND I PERSONALLY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING HOW OTHER WOMEN HAVE HANDLED VARIOUS SITUATIONS. JUST FOR PERSPECTIVE'S SAKE IF NOTHING ELSE.

"I FRANKLY FEEL A DEGREE OF SYMPATHY FOR J.R.G. OF NEW YORK, HOWEVER SINCE I PERSONALLY DO NOTHING TO IMPROVE MATTERS I DON'T FEEL I HAVE A WRITER'S RIGHT - IF SUCH A THING EXISTS - TO COMPLAIN. I'VE YET TO MEET ANYONE WHO UNDER ALL THE FACADES DID NOT SECRETLY VISION HIM/HERSELF SMILING BENIGNLY AT THE SIDE OF A TABLE STACKED WITH HIS/HER BOOK TOWARD THE HUNGRY AUTOGRAPH HUNTERS. BUT FEW OF US HAVE THE NERVE TO PURSUE THIS DREAM MUCH LESS HAVE THE TALENT.

"AND IN REPLY TO J.R.G., I DON'T SEE WHERE SHE HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF ANY FALSE ADVERTISING...NO ONE HAS INDICATED THAT YOURS IS THE HOMOSEXUAL NEW YORKER AND THEREFORE I DON'T THINK ANY OF US HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT MORE THAN WHAT YOU ARE NOW DOING. I CAN JUST SEE DOROTHY PARKER SUBMITTING A MSS. TO YOU FOR NO PAYMENT. THOSE WHO HAVE TALENT WHICH IS SALABLE MIGHT

LIKE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES TO YOU BUT I DOUBT THAT THEY HAVE THE TIME.

"ALSO I DON'T FIND THE POETRY (THE RARE TIMES I HAVE READ ANY OF IT) ANY MORE SACCHARINE OR JUVENILELY ROMANTIC THAN EMILY DICKINSON -- IT'S JUST THAT DICKINSON WAS A BETTER WRITER PER SE.

"IN KEEPING WITH MY FORMER SUGGESTION, ANOTHER ONE MIGHT BE A READER'S RESPONSE COLUMN TO YOUR LESBIANA COMMENTS. ASK WHAT OTHERS FELT ABOUT THE BOOKS YOU HAVE REVIEWED, PRO OR CON. IT COULD BE A VERY INTERESTING MONTHLY DEBATE.

"YOU MIGHT ALSO RUN A YEARLY CONTEST FOR POETRY OR FICTION PROSE WITH A PRIZE BEING A FREE SUBSCRIPTION OR -- IF THE FUNDS ALLOW, A SMALL CASH PRIZE. THERE ARE COUNTLESS CATEGORIES THAT WOULD STIMULATE INTEREST AND GIVE A FEELING OF BEING A 'PART' OF YOUR MAGAZINE."

Y. MacM., NEW YORK

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"I THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO SEND ME THE ISSUES OF THE LADDER WHICH RECEIVE ALL MY ATTENTION.

"IN THE ISSUE OF JULY THE PICTURE ILLUSTRATING 'ARTEMIS SMITH SPEAKS FOR HERSELF' IS A FELICITOUS INNOVATION.

"I'VE BEEN VERY INTERESTED BY THE DR. W. B. POMEROY'S SPEECH. CONCERNING THIS OPINION 'OUR PRESENT-DAY ATTITUDES STEM FROM THE ANCIENT JUDAIC LAWS...' I AGREE AND I BELIEVE IT'S PARADOXICAL, IN A WORLD IN FULL EVOLUTION, OUR ATTITUDES, OUR PREJUDICES, ALL OUR ETHIC CONTINUE TO STEM FROM MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN CODE WHICH TOOK OVER ANCIENT HEBREW LAWS, OLD OF MORE THAN 2000 YEARS!

"I CONSIDER, IF THE CHURCHES HAVE MAINTAINED THE MORAL BORN FROM THE ANCIENT-TESTAMENT'S ETHIC, ETHIC OF PROHIBITION, OF TABOOS, ETC... (YOU DON'T...), THE VERITABLE CHRISTIC MORAL IS ABOVE ALL A MORAL OF ACTION, OF EFFICIENCY (YOU DO...), A LIBERATOR MORAL WHICH CONDEMN ONLY WHAT IS PREJUDICIAL FOR OTHERS.

"I THINK PERHAPS THE HEBRAIC LAWS AGAINST MASTURBATION AND HOMOSEXUALITY WAS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO PERMIT THE EXTENSION OF THE RACE (AS THE POLYGAMY, FOR INSTANCE..); BUT THEY DON'T TAKE PLACE IN OUR MODERN SOCIETY. I BELIEVE, IN OUR TOO PEOPLED WORLD, SEXUALITY DON'T MEAN REPRODUCTION, AND THE HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICES ARE A NATURAL MEANS OF BIRTH-CONTROL.

"A TOTAL SEXUAL LIBERTY IS AN ESSENTIAL AND INDISPENSABLE PART OF THE PRACTICAL AND UNIVERSAL ETHIC WHICH WOULD BE THE ONE OF OUR MODERN SOCIETY."

P.L., PARIS, FRANCE

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"IN THE JULY ISSUE OF THE LADDER, THERE WAS A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR, SAYING FEWER AND FEWER LETTERS FROM READERS ARE RECEIVED.

"AS FOR MYSELF, I READ MY LADDER AS SOON AS I RECEIVE IT.

"I MAKE COMMENTS TO MYSELF ABOUT THE STORIES AND ARTICLES, AND PRAISE THEM. THEN I SAY I WILL WRITE, BUT NEVER SEEM TO GET AROUND TO DOING IT.

"SO, THAT IS THE REASON I HAVE NOT WRITTEN. JUST SHEER LAZINESS.

"I DO BELIEVE THE JULY ISSUE WAS JUST ABOUT THE BEST I HAVE READ.

"THE COVER WAS VERY GOOD. EACH ARTICLE AND STORY I ENJOYED VERY MUCH.

"THE THREE LINES ON THE BACK WERE SO VERY BEAUTIFUL AND THEY TOUCHED ME VERY DEEPLY.

"I DO HOPE OTHERS WHO READ THE LADDER WILL DO AS I DID AND JUST DROP EVERYTHING AND WRITE A FEW LINES TO YOU.

"I THINK THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS IS THE GREATEST THING FOR WE GIRLS, WHO ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT."

M.G., NEW JERSEY

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